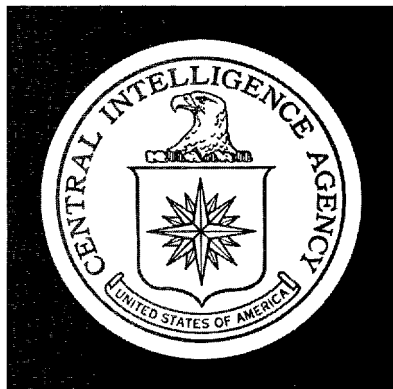


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Approved For Release 2003/01/29 : CIA-RDP79T00975A011700010001-0

Approved For Release 2003/01/29 : CIA-RDP79T00975A011700010001-0

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No. 0211/68
18 July 1968

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[Czechoslovakia-USSR: European Communists appear to be more sharply split than ever following publication of the demands of the USSR and four of its allies which would turn back the political clock in Czechoslovakia.

Yesterday the French Communist Party issued an urgent call for a conference of European parties on Czechoslovak developments. The French party's proposal was made after party leader Waldeck-Rochet, who had returned from a hurried visit to Moscow yesterday, met with his politburo. It is doubtful that he acted at Soviet instigation. Waldeck-Rochet reportedly went to the USSR to warn about the potentially disastrous effects on his party of further Soviet interference in Czechoslovak affairs.

The French party's call for a conference came after the British, Italian, Belgian, Rumanian, and Yugoslav parties had indicated dismay at the prospect of fuller Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia. Waldeck-Rochet reportedly will travel to Prague on 19 July. Yugoslavia's Tito reportedly is to arrive in Czechoslovakia today, in response to an appeal from Czechoslovak party leader Dubcek. Rumania's Ceausescu also may arrive at about the same time as Tito. The Italian, Austrian, and Swiss parties have already responded favorably to the French party's proposal for the conference. Others, such as the Dutch party, are considering their positions.

The letter sent to Prague by participants in the 14-15 July meeting in Warsaw was not the "conciliatory but firm" document predicted by Poland's premier. It charged that political activities in Czechoslovakia were aimed at the foundations of Communism in the country and had not met with any effective rebuff from the party leadership. The signers, leaders of East Germany, Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria, and the USSR, asserted they could not stand aside while "imperialism" made a breach in **]**

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[the socialist system, "by peaceful or unpeaceful means, from inside or outside," which would change power relations in Europe. Such developments, the letter said, threatened the security of the whole socialist system.

The signers demanded that the Czechoslovak party take four steps to redress the situation: resolutely attack right-wing and antisocialist forces, mobilize all the power of the state in defense of Communism, reimpose party control of news media, and return to operation of the party on the basis of Soviet-style principles--including that of complete centralization of power. The letter made no mention, however, of what action the five would take if Prague failed to heed these demands, suggesting that the crisis is still in the talking stage.

The Soviet leadership hastily convened the Communist Party central committee yesterday to add the weight of its formal endorsement to the Warsaw joint letter. A partial text of the committee's resolution broadcast last night repeated the warnings of the letter in more general but no less stern terms. The sketchy information thus far available on the meeting does not indicate whether Brezhnev, who made the major speech, sought central committee approval for any specific policy moves in the future.

Czechoslovak sensitivity to the presence of Soviet troops is high. A top party spokesman has publicly accused Soviet Marshal Yakubovsky of having broken his word to Dubcek by interrupting withdrawals on 14 July. Noting that Yakubovsky's complete staff and facilities were still operational in Czechoslovakia, the spokesman added that the Soviet marshal would again fail to keep his word if all Soviet military forces had not departed by 21 July.

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【South Vietnam: Sporadic ground contacts and a number of mortar attacks comprised the only significant military activity on 16-17 July.

Reduced military activity is again reflected in battlefield statistics. Last week casualties remained low on both sides, with the number of Communist troops killed at the lowest level since the first of 1967. Only 17 enemy attacks were recorded, the lowest figure for the past 18 months. All kinds of enemy-initiated incidents totaled 473, compared with a weekly average of 741 in 1967 and 899 so far this year. [REDACTED]

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Iraq: The right-wing socialist Baath group which took power in Baghdad on 17 July seems to be well in control.

The new government, headed by former prime minister Hasan al-Bakr, has now formed a revolutionary council. The capital apparently is calm, and the curfew imposed during the coup was scheduled to be lifted during daylight hours today. Former president Arif has been exiled to London and flew there on an Iraqi plane yesterday.

Although the new government claims to be a coalition of various political factions, it is heavily dominated by the Baathists. One of the early statements issued after the takeover referred to the "black November setback"--the overthrow of the previous Baathist regime in Iraq in 1963.

Although both the new rulers in Iraq and those now governing in Syria style themselves as Baathists, they belong to different factions of the movement. The coup in Iraq may encourage a group of former Syrian Baathist leaders, who have been in exile since early 1966, to try to regain power in Damascus.

With more than 20,000 Iraqi troops stationed in northern Jordan, the coup may have political implications for King Husayn's position. Closer contacts may be established between the Iraqis and radical Jordanian elements, although the small Jordanian Baath Party generally follows the same line as the ruling Syrian Baathists. Cairo has been reticent in commenting on the new regime, presumably waiting for the dust to settle. [REDACTED]

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Turkey: Leftist student demonstrations have attacked visiting US Navy personnel in Istanbul during two days of anti-US disturbances.

The attacks, the most violent so far directed against US personnel in Turkey, included numerous harassments of sailors and officers from US Sixth Fleet units presently calling at Istanbul. Buses and taxis carrying touring sailors have been stoned, as has the hotel housing the US Navy shore patrol.

Yesterday about 200 hard-core leftist demonstrators broke through a Turkish military police cordon protecting the landing pier used by the US sailors, shoving four sailors into the water. The pier was ordered evacuated and some of the visitors were returned to their ships by boat.

Local Turkish police and military forces have been ineffective in their handling of the situation. The Istanbul provost marshal appears unwilling to move decisively against the militants, and has instead concentrated on trying to get shore liberty for the US sailors canceled.

The Demirel government is sensitive to charges of being a US puppet and up to now has avoided a direct confrontation with the student group, the Turkish National Student Federation, which is behind the present outburst.

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Nigeria: Direct political contacts between the two sides in the civil war are again in the offing.

The Biafrans quickly accepted an invitation to attend the meeting of the Organization of African Unity's consultative committee on Nigeria. A high-level federal Nigerian delegation is already attending the committee sessions, which began in Niamey, Niger, on 15 July.

Biafra undoubtedly sees this as an opportunity to enhance its international standing and to press its views through talks with the six states on the committee--Ethiopia, Liberia, Congo (Kinshasa), Niger, Cameroon, and Ghana. The Biafrans were asked to arrive by today but have said they will be unable to reach Niamey until the weekend.

The committee has also invited Gabon and Ivory Coast, two of the four states that have recognized Biafra, to send delegations to accompany the Biafrans. Federal leader Gowon, who addressed the committee on 16 July, approved this move, partly in hope that these states might influence the Biafran leaders to be more flexible.

The OAU committee's main efforts will be to seek a face-saving cease-fire formula. At present, however, there are no indications the committee will succeed. Gowon has again told the committee that he is determined to continue the war until the Biafrans renounce secession, while the Biafrans are adamant on getting an unconditional cease-fire before they renew formal talks. The committee itself is already on record as supporting federal efforts to reunify Nigeria.

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France-USSR: Franco-Soviet plans announced last February for the launching of a satellite to orbit the moon apparently have been superseded by plans to soft-land a spacecraft on the lunar surface.

No reason was given for the mission change, which no doubt was a Soviet decision. According to French sources, the Soviets will supply the launch system and the major portion of the satellite package, while the French will provide instrumentation to analyze the lunar atmosphere and surface.

The satellite is to be launched in late 1969. Development work on the French instrumentation may have been hampered by the recent unrest in France. Disruption was especially serious at the Aeronomy Laboratory, where much of the package is being prepared. The instruments do not have to be delivered to the Soviets until the end of this year, however, so any delay suffered during the recent crisis probably will not seriously affect the project.

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Cyprus: The three-week-old intercommunal talks on Cyprus are proceeding in an unusually cordial atmosphere. President Makarios is "guardedly optimistic," but believes that substantial differences remain on such questions as demilitarization, police powers, and the future executive and legislative roles of the Turkish Cypriots. This judgment generally is confirmed by Turkish sources. The negotiators plan to recess for two weeks late this month, after which committees of experts will proceed with detailed negotiations. [REDACTED]

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Congo (Kinshasa): The government has tentatively decided to end the training of Congolese cadets in Belgium, establishing instead military schools in the Congo. The move may be an attempt to deal with the increasing problem of discontented young officers who, after several years training in Europe, believe their superior abilities and training are wasted when they return.

Congolese senior officers apparently believe that the plan would help to limit the size of this group, provide more prestigious jobs in the new academies for those already trained abroad, and ease the pressure of the young officers for assignment to politically risky field command slots. At the same time, poorer cadet training in Congolese schools would further hamper efforts to improve the competence of the army and might give younger officers a new grievance. [REDACTED]

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